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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL RIGHTS
Sixth session
Geneva, 25 November-13 December 1991

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The sixth session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/17, will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 25 November to 13 December 1991. The first meeting will be convened on Monday, 25 November 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

2. The attached provisional agenda and annotations for the sixth session of the Committee have been prepared by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 4 of the rules of procedure of the Committee.

3. The attention of the States parties is drawn, in particular, to the annotations to item 7, containing the list of reports that will be before the Committee at its sixth session.

4. A pre-sessional working group of the Committee composed of five members, established in accordance with rule 56 of the rules of procedure, met for a period of one week at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 16 to 20 September 1991.

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PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.

2. Election of officers.

3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Organization of work.

5. Action by the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1991; by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session; and by the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-seventh session.

6. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

7. Consideration of reports:

   (a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant;

   (b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant.

8. General discussion on the topic of social and economic indicators.

9. Preparatory activities relating to the World Conference on Human Rights.

10. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies.

11. Report of the Committee to the Economic and Social Council.

ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the session

The sixth session of the Committee will be opened by the representative of the Secretary-General who will preside over the meeting until the election of the Chairman of the Committee.

2. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 14 of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, with due regard for equitable geographical representation.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Under rule 5 of the rules of procedure, the first item on the provisional agenda of any session shall be the adoption of the agenda, except for the election of its officers when required under rule 14. In accordance with rule 6 the Committee, during a session, may revise the agenda and may, as appropriate, add, delete or defer items.

4. Organization of work

In accordance with rule 8 of its rules of procedure, at the beginning of each session, the Committee shall consider appropriate organizational matters, including the schedule of its meetings and the possibility of holding a general discussion on the measures adopted and the progress made in achieving the observance of the rights recognized in the Covenant. In this connection, the attention of the members of the Committee is drawn to the draft programme of work for the session, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and in accordance with established practice (E/C.12/1991/L.1).

The Committee, at its third session, agreed to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that its pre-sessional working group should, in the future, be held some one to three months in advance of the Committee's sessions in order to give States parties adequate notice of the list of issues, and to allow for the timely translation and dissemination of the latter. At its first regular session of 1990, the Council, by its decision 1990/252 of 25 May 1990, approved the holding of the Committee's pre-sessional working group one to three months prior to the session of the Committee. Accordingly, the pre-sessional working group of the sixth session met for a period of one week from 16 to 20 September 1991.

5. Action by the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1991; the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session and by the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-seventh session

The Committee, at its fourth session, decided that, at its future sessions, a new item should be added to its agenda so as to enable it to reflect on any feedback received from the discussion of its work by the Council, as well as by the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly (E/1990/23, para. 297).

The attention of the members of the Committee is drawn to Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/33, of 31 May 1991 by which the Council, inter alia, reaffirmed the importance of the International Covenants on Human Rights as major parts of the international effort to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms; welcomed the adoption by the Committee of a general comment at both its third and fourth sessions, and encouraged the Committee to continue using that mechanism to develop a fuller appreciation of the obligations of States parties under the Covenant; and further welcomed the fact that the Committee, in its general comment on article 2, paragraph 1, of the Covenant, adopted at its fifth session, dealt with the nature of States parties' obligations.

The Council, by the same resolution, decided to transmit the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session for consideration under the agenda item entitled "Human rights questions". The relevant resolutions of the General Assembly will be made available to the Committee at its sixth session.

Furthermore, the Council, acting upon the Committee's recommendation, adopted decision 1991/265 in which it appealed to the following States, which have been parties to the Covenant for more than 10 years but which have yet to submit even the initial report required by the Covenant, to do so as soon as possible: El Salvador, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Sri Lanka and Suriname.

By its decision 1991/266, the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake, as soon as possible, the preparation and publication of a brochure or booklet describing in detail the work of the Committee.

The attention of the members of the Committee is also drawn to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1991/30 by which the Commission, inter alia, recommended that the persons chairing the bodies established under international human rights instruments, or their designated representatives, should contribute to the preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights by taking part as appropriate in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference.

Accordingly, the Committee will have before it under this item:

(a) Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/33 and decisions 1991/265 and 1991/266;

(b) The relevant General Assembly resolutions;

(c) Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1991/13, 1991/14, 1991/15, 1991/16, 1991/18, 1991/20 and 1991/30.

6. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 59, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure of the Committee, the Committee shall at each session consider the status of submission of reports under article 16 of the Covenant and may make

appropriate recommendations in its report to the Council, including recommendations to the effect that the Secretary-General should send reminders to States parties from which reports have not been received. In accordance with rule 51, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure, a list of States parties to the Covenant shall be annexed to the report of the Committee on each session, together with an indication of the status of submission of reports by States parties.

In connection with the consideration by the Committee of this item, the particular attention of the Committee is drawn to document E/C.12/1990/5, containing the revised schedule for the submission of reports by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant as adopted by the Committee at its fourth session.

The Committee will have before it under this item:

(a) A revised schedule for the submission of reports by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1990/5);

(b) A note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Covenant and the status of submission of reports (E/C.12/1991/3);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General reproducing a compilation of revised general guidelines regarding the form and contents of reports to be submitted by States parties (E/C.12/1991/1);

(d) The relevant General Assembly resolutions and Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/33 and decision 1991/265.

7. Consideration of reports

(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 61, paragraph 2, of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall normally consider the reports submitted by States parties under article 16 of the Covenant in the order in which they have been received by the Secretary-General. Representatives of the reporting States are entitled to be present at the meetings of the Committee when their reports are examined; such representatives should be able to make statements on the reports submitted by their States and reply to questions which may be put to them by the members of the Committee.

The Committee, at its fifth session, having discussed the arrangements for the consideration of reports submitted by States parties, requested the Secretary-General to schedule 13 reports from 10 States parties for consideration at its sixth session. The Committee also decided to discuss at its sixth session the additional information submitted by Zaire, France, the Netherlands, Colombia and Jamaica as a follow-up to the discussion of their respective reports.

In accordance with rule 62, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure, the Secretary-General has informed the States parties concerned of the opening date and duration of the sixth session of the Committee at which their respective reports will be examined and has invited them to send representatives to attend the meetings of the Committee.

As at 1 October 1991, the reports and additional information listed below had been received by the Secretary-General. The reports of the States parties which are scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its sixth session, in accordance with the above-mentioned decision of the Committee, are identified by an asterisk. The tentative timetable for consideration of those reports, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, is contained in document E/C.12/1991/L.1.

Initial reports concerning articles 6 to 9 of the Covenant

Afghanistan*	(E/1984/6/Add.12)
Panama*	(E/1984/6/Add.19)

Initial reports concerning articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant

Nicaragua	(E/1986/3/Add.15)

Initial reports concerning articles 13 to 15 of the Covenant

Democratic People's Republic of Korea*	(E/1988/5/Add.6)
Panama*	(E/1988/5/Add.9)

Second periodic reports concerning articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant

Panama*	(E/1986/4/Add.22)

Second periodic reports concerning articles 13 to 15 of the Covenant

Finland*	(E/1990/7/Add.1)
Sweden*	(E/1990/7/Add.2)
Spain*	(E/1990/7/Add.3)
Colombia*	(E/1990/7/Add.4)
Republic of Belarus*	(E/1990/7/Add.5)
Czech and Slovak Federal Republic*	(E/1990/7/Add.6)
Norway	(E/1990/7/Add.7)
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	(E/1990/7/Add.8)
Poland	(E/1990/7/Add.9)
Hungary	(E/1990/7/Add.10)
Ukraine	(E/1990/7/Add.11)

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* Reports scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its sixth session (for the tentative timetable see document E/C.12/1991/L.1).

Initial reports concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant

New Zealand	(E/1990/5/Add.5)
Iceland	(E/1990/5/Add.6)
Uruguay	(E/1990/5/Add.7)
Afghanistan*	(E/1990/5/Add.8)

Second periodic reports concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant

Syrian Arab Republic*	(E/1990/6/Add.1)
Italy	(E/1990/6/Add.2)

Additional information submitted by States parties to the Covenant following the consideration of their reports by the Committee

Zaire*	(E/1989/5)
France*	(E/1989/5/Add.1)
Netherlands*	(E/1989/5/Add.2)
Colombia*	(E/1989/5/Add.3)
Jamaica*	(E/1989/5/Add.4)
Panama	(E/1989/5/Add.5)
Jordan	(E/1989/5/Add.6)

(b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 67 of its rules of procedure, the Committee is entrusted with the task of considering the reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant.

In accordance with rule 68 of the rules of procedure, the representatives of the specialized agencies concerned may make statements on matters falling within the scope of the activities of their respective organization in the course of the discussion by the Committee of the report of each State party to the Covenant. The representatives of the States parties presenting reports to the Committee shall be free to respond to, or take into account, the statements made by the specialized agencies.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General has invited the following specialized agencies to send representatives to attend the meetings of the Committee: International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and World Health Organization (WHO).

Any report which may be received from the specialized agencies under article 18 of the Covenant will be made available to the Committee in due course.

8. General discussion on the topic of social and economic indicators

At its fifth session, the Committee decided that at its sixth session a day of general discussion would be held on Monday, 9 December 1991, devoted to the topic of social and economic indicators pertaining to the work of the

Committee. For this purpose, the Committee agreed to invite all interested agencies and individual experts to participate in its general discussion (E/1991/23, para. 273).

9. Preparatory activities relating to the World Conference on Human Rights

Under this item, the Committee will have before it the report of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference (A/CONF.157/PC/13) and will receive an oral briefing on that session from one of its members. In the light of those reports, the Committee will consider any contribution that it may wish to make to the second session of the Preparatory Committee.

10. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies

As required under rule 64 of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall make suggestions and recommendations of a general nature on the basis of its consideration of reports submitted by States parties and the reports submitted by specialized agencies, in order to assist the Council to fulfil, in particular, its responsibilities under articles 21 and 22 of the Covenant. The Committee may also make suggestions for the consideration of the Council with reference to articles 19, 22 and 23 of the Covenant.

11. Report of the Committee to the Economic and Social Council

In accordance with rule 57 of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall submit to the Council an annual report on its activities, including a summary of its consideration of the reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant. The report may include general observations by members of the Committee on the basis of their consideration of States parties' reports.

The Committee shall also include in its report suggestions and recommendations of a general nature referred to under rule 64 of the rules of procedure of the Committee.